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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR URGES SUNNI LEADERS TO PARTICIPATE IN  
POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Ambassador told the Speaker of the Council of Representatives (CoR) Dr. Mahmoud Mashhadani September 7 that, for Iraq to succeed, the political parties need to cooperate to strengthen the unity government and to deal with tough, divisive issues. The Ambassador encouraged the Speaker to attend the Political Committee meeting that evening to discuss these issues (e.g., hydrocarbon, federalism, provincial elections) and to reach agreement on timelines for resolution. The Speaker replied that Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi had told him and Deputy Prime Minister Salam al-Zubai that they should not attend the meeting because al-Hashimi feels Prime Minister Maliki is marginalizing the Sunni Arabs. The Ambassador warned that if Tawafuq boycotts the meeting, it risks being seen as not serious about the national unity government.

¶2. (U) The Ambassador also encouraged the Tawafuq bloc partners to work closely with each other. The Speaker agreed, noting a disagreement the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) and the National Dialogue Council, both Tawafuq members, over the allocation of ministerial appointments, one that could be solved if deputy ministers were appointed per the government formation agreement. He added that Tawafuq wants to see Sunni Defense Minister Abd al-Qadr replaced because they consider him weak and unable to resist Shia pressure. He cited an incident where the Minister refused to send troops to investigate a Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) weapons cache because, the Minister said, the army could not handle the JAM. The Speaker also described DPM Salam al-Zubai as incompetent, and said Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rafia al-Esawi or CoR member Dhafer al-Ani would be better candidates.

¶3. (C) In a follow-on meeting with a delegation of Tawafuq CoR members, Abd al-Nasr al-Janabi told the Ambassador that the Constitutional Review Committee needs to be activated per Article 142. He said the Shia Coalition and Kurdish Alliance are impeding its activation and do not want reconciliation. Dr. Alaa Mekki stated that federalism should be postponed until the constitutional review is completed. He added that, if not, there will be political problems. The Ambassador reiterated that real national reconciliation will not happen without agreement on the tough issues and that such agreement will require compromises from all sides. (Note: VP Abdel Mehdi informed the Ambassador that Mashhadani and Zubai did attend the political committee meeting, but VP al-Hashimi did not. End Note.)  
KHALILZAD